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MR. G R A T T A N'S

S P E E C H

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS OF IRELAND,

ON

Saturday the 26th of March, 1791,

ON THE

RESPONSIBILITY BILL.

D U B L I N :

PRINTED BY JAMES MOORE, No 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.

1791.

Mr. G. Grattan

MR. G. E. W. T. A. N.

S. P. E. C. H.



House of Commons

Presented to the House of Commons

by

James Smith, Esq.

Printed by James Smith, Esq.

1791

THE
S P E E C H
OF
Mr. GRATTAN, &c.

S I R,

THE Honourable Gentlemen who inveigh
against the bill, inveigh against the constitution of
England; for the bill does no more than establish
in Ireland the antient and regular practice of Great
Britain:—every clause and every regulation of that
bill is copied from English acts and English
practice

practice applied to this country ; but it is the misfortune of those gentlemen who have taken a part against us in this debate, that they should not have either read the bill with care, nor considered the constitution of England with due attention. I will tell them what they seem not to be apprised of, that no money can issue out of the English treasury by the order of his Majesty—there must be the counter signature of certain officers, and a variety of other checks, without which, by the law of England, the issue cannot be made. There is a privy seal, which seal must be annexed by the keeper thereof ; there must be a warrant which must be signed by the Lords of the Treasury, and sent to the auditor. The King cannot command any disbursement without the signature of these officers ; that is, he cannot with his own hand, or by his own order, dispose of the money of his Treasury ; his orders and signature are necessary, but so is the signature of his officers ; his officers cannot act without him, but he cannot act without them ; he may dismiss them for their refusal, but he must supply their place with others, for he cannot act by himself ; this is the practice and principle of the constitution of Great Britain, and every argument urged by those gentlemen against the bill, goes with equal force against the constitution of England ; if requiring the signature of certain Irish stationary officers in the disbursement

bursement of Irish money subverts the Regal Government in Ireland, the Regal Government is already subverted in Great Britain, because no money can be disbursed without the signature of various officers of Stole and Treasury. If such a signature required in Ireland subverts the power of the Lord Lieutenant, such a signature long existing in England must have long subverted the power of his Majesty, and the monarchy of England must have been long ago in ruins; and all I can collect from invectives of gentlemen against the bill is, that they do not know the constitution of England when they read it. Here is a bill enacting certain practices and regulations which obtain in England, and applying them to Ireland; and those gentlemen from whom we hear so often encomiums on the British constitution, know so little of it, that when they read of its regulations in an instrument purporting to be an Irish bill, they call those regulations the subversion of Regal Government. If they are sincere in the arguments they advance, they are enemies, not to the liberty of Ireland, but to the constitution, as by law established in Great Britain; they must think the regulations which England has established as indispensable in the exercise of the Regal Government are bad measures. They seem to be so little apprised of that constitution, that they have plainly told us, that if the King or the

Lord Lieutenant act by their officers, though dissimilable at pleasure, they cannot act at all.— They seem not to recollect that all warrants, or letters for money, the subject of this bill, though they must be signed by certain officers to have effect, yet cannot be signed by those officers, nor have any effect whatsoever unless previously signed by his Majesty and the Lord Lieutenant. They seem not to recollect that under the practice of English Government, and under this bill which only adopts that practice, no act of executive can be done without will of the King, and here that of the King and his Viceroy; but that will must be signified by officers of State whom the King or Lord Lieutenant may remove, or, in other words, the Royal character cannot act without executive officers, nor the executive officers act without orders from the Royal character on whose pleasure their duration depends.—Thus does the monarch preserve his will in the State, and thus does the Parliament provide that there shall be persons answerable to them for the legal and wholesome exercise of that will——no act of executive can commence without the approbation of his Majesty, nor be finally executed without the assistance of servants removable at his pleasure, and forthcoming to Parliament.— Thus, is the inviolability of the Sovereign rendered, by the responsibility of his servants, consistent with

with the rights and safety of his people. I am not now answering the argument of gentlemen of the other side, I am giving them lessons—and I hope whenever they again arraign our measures they will have learned somewhat more of the constitution of these countries.

An Hon. Gentleman on the third bench offers himself to your consideration, and he tells you that his Majesty has an independent power in the management of the Revenue of Great Britain. Sir, this is a most ignorant and dangerous position, unfounded in constitution, law or practice—before the Hon. Gentleman gives opinions in this House, he should inform himself better—let me tell that Hon. Member that the King of England cannot in his country disburse one farthing out of the Treasury by his own hand or signature, and that there must be the signature of officers of State countersigning the warrant or letter of the King, and the reason for this is a principle with which the Member seems as little acquainted with as with the fact, a principle that for the acts of the King, especially in the management of money, there must be always certain officers forthcoming to the grand inquest of the nation.—Sir, the Hon. Member has not been satisfied with advancing such an assertion, but has attributed his own ignorant and criminal conceptions to the
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name of Somers, whose pages he seems to understand as little as he does the constitution. Sir, that the gentleman should be ignorant of this practical part of the British executive is the most surprizing to me because it is the practical part, and therefore lies within the knowledge of a clerk. Sir, had the Hon. Member known any thing of the proceedings of the British House of Commons, he could not have remained in such entire ignorance about the proceedings of his Treasury, for he would have then known that the Commons so far from holding that his Majesty has an independent power in his Treasury, have resolved that the expenditure of the civil list is subject to the controul of Parliament. The Hon. Gentleman having shewn how much he knows of the constitution of his own country, proceeds to preach to us about ours, and he tells us that it is essential that there should be in these two countries but one executive power—thus he leaves you two of the estates of your constitution and takes away the third—that part of your constitution which is the monarchical part he totally and entirely extinguishes, that is to say, he advances a doctrine which entirely subverts your constitution—before he ventured to advance in the Parliament of this country such dangerous ignorance, he should have been taught, that as the Crowns of these kingdoms are essentially annexed, so the executive powers

powers emanating therefrom are essentially distinct—distinct civil, ecclesiastical, judicial, fiscal establishments, with distinct stamps of authority, and for these among other reasons, because in contemplation of law there should be distinct officers forthcoming to the respective parliaments of the country, and the Irish Crown is annexed to but not merged in the crown of Great Britain—the Hon. Gentleman having displayed his ignorance of the monarchical part of the constitution, shews an ignorance as desperate when he delivers his doctrine with regard to the democratical part or the powers of this House, he tells you that the coercive power of the Irish House of Commons over the Ministers of the Crown, lies in their power of refusing the supply—he does not know that you have a right to proceed in a criminal manner, he does not know that you can impeach—he robs you of your inquisitorial power as the grand inquest of the nation, and leaves you nothing but a negative on supply,—he robs the Commons of Ireland of their inquest as he before robbed the K. of Ireland of his executive.—After having uttered such extraordinary, unprincipled and ignorant doctrine, with regard to the whole and the different parts of your constitution, the Hon. Gentleman proceeds to favour us with a little of our own history, and he observes on parties in this country, and their principles, and the ways adopted by British Government

Government to extinguish them, and he tells you that one of those ways was that most excellent measure, a limitation of the duration of Parliament. Sir, the Hon. Gentleman might have stated other and very different ways whereby Ministers endeavoured to defeat party and principle in this country—does the Hon. Member know that a Minister once went so far in this country as to drill the House of Commons, and placed for the purpose of watching the members of this House, a man publicly and scandalously officiating in that box during the sitting of this House—has the member forgotten that transaction? I'll tell that member, that if the most ambitious aristocracy he ever ventured to depict, was to become the Ministry, they would possess at least one advantage—they would be a government of gentlemen—the gentlemen of the country—not a Government of panders and runners, first mixing with the gentry of the country, and then rising from public mischief into public situations.

The bill is opposed principally on two grounds, one made by the Right Hon. Baronet on the floor, the other made by the Right Hon. Baronet near him. The first ground is a proposition that there is a responsibility already; the other that the responsibility proposed by the bill would subvert the regal constitution of the country, or in other words,

words, that there should not be any responsibility whatsoever. The Right Hon. Gentleman who makes the first proposition explains his meaning, and tells you have a responsibility, because you have a House of Commons—he means an inquest capable to examine and to impeach; it remains for him to shew how that inquest is to proceed, and where are the men forthcoming to its jurisdiction?—We'll begin with the Treasury.

The Right Hon. Gentleman must allow that all responsibility is taken from that most essential department. The High Treasurership is a sinecure—the Vice-treasurerships are sinecures—the Deputy, a situation merely instrumental, and in no degree whatsoever ministerial. Government has demolished the fiscal part of the Irish executive, and has reduced the great offices to sinecures, and the great operations of money to clerks. You have great offices without employment, and subordinate employment with immense salaries, thus you have the incumbrance—you lose the responsibility. Just enough of the Irish treasury remains to shew what your constitution ought to be, and what depredations have been committed upon it. Here your Government has been made, by innovation, completely provincial, and presents neither the substance nor the shadow of a kingdom, and your executive,

executive, in this particular, is completely extinguished, by innovation.

We'll now consider the manner of disbursing money from this Treasury. The first step is, a King's letter signed by his Majesty, and countersigned by the Lords of the Treasury of England; those officers have not in this realm any right, authority, residence, or responsibility; their signature, far from supplying responsibility to your Parliament, does not admit of being noticed by your constitution—those officers are physically irresponsible, constitutionally unostensible. This letter therefore offers you no responsibility whatsoever. This letter is directed to the Lord Lieutenant, who thereupon makes out his warrant, reciting the purport of the letter, signed by the Lord Lieutenant at the top, and his Secretary at the bottom.

Here the Irish executive begins to act, and here is your sole responsibility. See what responsibility it affords you. The Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant, supposing him not to be fugacious, you cannot accept of as any adequate or respectable responsibility;—you cannot derogate from the dignity of your justice, and seriously hold out to your country that description of officer as security—the constitution don't notice him—he
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is not in its contemplation ; he may excite the indignation of Ireland ; he can never satisfy her justice.

As to his Excellency, the servants of the Crown allow the Lord Lieutenant is impeachable by the Parliament ; they not only allow it, but they make it the strength of their case. I'll suppose the Commons of Ireland resolve articles of impeachment against a Chief Governor, and that they send their messengers to the Lords, to acquaint them therewith, and to desire that he may be committed to their power. Where is he ? He is fled. Fled with his Secretary. Your impeachment would commence when his commission ceased, and his person was out of the jurisdiction of the realm. You can't follow his person, nor find his property. These great men who are held out as your sole security for acts of State, have seldom a freehold in your country—they could not be private, still less are they public security. I'll suppose on the application of this Parliament to his Majesty to interpose with the Parliament of Great Britain, the latter would transmit the person so impeached ; but the efficacy of your jurisdiction in that case depends on the success of your application ; that is, the responsibility held out to this country depends on the permission

permission of the Parliament of another, which is in fact, no responsibility whatsoever; and if ever the punishment of an unworthy Viceroy should become the unworthy cause of discontent and jealousy between the two nations, remember it is the servants of the Crown who are the cause, by leaving you no option, and affording you no person whomsoever to proceed against, save only the person of the Viceroy.

It follows from this that his Excellency affords no adequate responsibility. You can't derogate from your dignity to impeach him before the Lords of England, nor attach his person when you impeach him before the Lords of Ireland. It follows, that the responsibility held out by the Right Hon. Baronet is a delusion, and the Irish Government, in its perverted state, is composed of responsible officers who are not resident, and resident clerks who are not responsible. Thus all the money that you grant for the ordinary service of Government—all the money that your ancestors granted in perpetual revenue—the whole of the ordinary revenue, that is 1,000,000 per annum net may be drawn out of the Treasury, without the signature or controul of any one resident officer,
and

and the grand inquest of the nation, sitting here, with all its powers, cannot by any process punish or reach the delinquent, or redress the country; that argument, therefore, of the Right Hon. Baronet, which supposes that in establishing an Irish inquest you have established an Irish responsibility, is, I apprehend, detected and refuted.

Let us contemplate the nature of these two officers, the Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary, whom Right Hon. Gentlemen have offered as the only security of Ireland for the faithful application of her money—these officers certainly are responsible, they are responsible to the British Minister for watching the pretensions of Ireland—In 1753, a dispute arose about a surplus in the Treasury, and it was determined by the Commons of Ireland, that the surplus awaited the disposal of Parliament without the previous consent of the King—immediately after, that surplus, without the consent of Parliament and by the sole consent and order of the King, was issued from the Treasury, pursuant to a King's letter by virtue of a warrant signed by the Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary. Whose officers were these men then? and to whom responsible? Suppose it became an object to preserve
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in the Government of this country an unconstitutional Viceroy against the censures of Parliament and the sense of the nation, and suppose to accomplish that criminal end, the people to be sold in order to buy the Members of this House—whose officers would you find the Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary then? Whose officer was the Right Honourable Gentleman I now see in 1789—when this country was robbed about 1758, by additions to her Pension List, amounting to 30,000*l.* per annum when this country was sold in 69, as one of the present ministry declared in the House of Commons, and specified the sum at half a million? When in the years lapsing from 76 to 78, this country was sold by additions to her Pension List, amounting to about 27,000*l.* per annum—when in the years lapsing from 78 to 87, this country was robbed by additions to her Pension List, amounting to 29,000*l.*—when the country was again sold in 89, to buy the Parliament, as was threatened by one of the ministers in this House, and after executed by Lord Buckingham and his faction, whose officers were the Viceroy and Secretary then? Whose officer was the Right Hon. Member on the floor?

When the faith of Government was broken in its promise to equalize its expence to its revenue—when the faith of Government was broken in its promise to unite the Boards of Accounts and Stamps—when the faith of Government was broken in its promise to confine the number of Commissioners to seven—whose officers were those men ? A proof all this, that in the application of your money you have been governed, or rather plundered, for it can't be called Government ; plundered like a province, and that there has not existed in the persons of the Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary, or in any other person, to the Parliament of Ireland any Responsibility whatsoever. Otherwise you would not have had such a succession of crimes, or in such a succession of crimes you would have given some example of punishment. What monument is there of the justice of this country in such a train of offences ? Where is the record of Lord Buckingham's conviction ? But the fact is, that these men, the Viceroys and their Secretaries, never considered themselves as responsible to you, and you never acted as if you had any jurisdiction over them : they acted as English officers with Irish names, and the Irish servants of the Crown acted as their officers, not yours, and justified by their orders for the crimes they committed against you—the former acted as responsible to England for carrying through Parliament the measures of British

B Government,

Government, and the latter voted as responsible to the former for supporting the same.—I think I have answered the first objection, which assumes that there is an operative responsibility in Ireland. I come to the second, which assumes that there should not be in Ireland any responsibility whatever, or, in other words, that the bill before you, which does no more than secure that responsibility, subverts the royal power. Sir, responsibility is the vital principle of the British constitution, the King of these countries speaks only by seals—why? that for all his acts there may be officers forthcoming to Parliament—every patent must be under the sign manual, which is a warrant to the privy seal, which is a warrant to the great seal. Why? Lord Coke will tell you the reason; lest any thing should pass that instrument which might be illegal—he goes farther, he says, inconvenient—the King can't execute his own warrant, the King can't deliver his own judgment—why? because for every act of the King there must be responsible officers—The precaution of England extends this principle to Ireland, and has in the disbursement of money from the Irish Treasury, five officers forthcoming to her inquest, three Lords of the British Treasury and the Irish Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary; and you have not one, you have not a concurrent responsibility in the exercise of your own executive, and in the disbursement of
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your own money. She Great Britain, extends this precaution even to your Legislature, and no Irish act of Parliament can pass which is not certified under the Great Seal of England, that the keeper of that instrument may be responsible to England for the legislative proceedings of the Irish Parliament; thus that principle which England exacts in the legislative operations of your country, you don't require in her executive, so that you proceed not only not according to, but directly against the practice and principle of England. She extends this principle of responsibility to abuses of legal power as well as to violations. I am surprised to hear an Hon. Gentleman acknowledge his ignorance of the constitution of England, by observing that the servants of the Crown are justified by the order of the King, and are only answerable for violations of law; but in a limited monarchy, and especially in that limited monarchy which places the first magistrate of the people at the head of the church, the army, and the treasury, with the powers of peace and war, and with a sacred attribute vested in his person, nothing can prevent that magistrate from becoming a most tyrannical power, but an obligation on him to act through the medium of his servants, who are to be answerable for the abuses of his power as well as the violation of the law—the nature of a trust requires that the trustee shall, through his minister, be answerable

for abuse as well as violation. I might quote authorities many on this part of the question—Mr. Hume, no enthusiast for liberty, who observes that in a limited monarchy it is essential that the Ministers of the King shall be responsible for his acts, and he adds that the orders of the King must not be a justification—Lord Coke, who tells you in his chapter on Parliament that the House of Commons is the grand inquisitor of the nation, he does not mean for the purpose of enquiring into illegalities ; no ; grievances are his words, grievances which arise not more frequently from breaches of law, than from abuses of regal power.

I might quote precedents from the earliest to the latest periods of English story, from the case of De la Pole, in Richard the 2d, proceeded against, among other particulars, for misapplication of subsidy—to the case of the Duke of Suffolk, proceeded against, among other articles, for misapplication of subsidy, and for advising the King to unnecessary wars—to the case of De Vere, proceeded against, among other articles, for intercepting subsidy intended for the defence of the kingdom—to the case of the Duke of Buckingham, Lords Danby, Oxford, Bolingbroke, and a multitude of others, in every one of whose criminal prosecutions you will find articles for the abuse of legal power, and from the whole of whose cases you will deduce that evil councils, improvident

dent war, ignominious peace, neglect of the seal, and misapplication of public money, though not against positive law, are sufficient ground for Parliamentary impeachment.

This principle arising out of these cases, and the responsibility arising out of this principle, are not less, as has been insinuated, but more applicable to you than to Great Britain; and first, because your servants require to be admonished on this subject, for they have this night betrayed a most extraordinary ignorance of the nature of the monarchy they live under, and therefore require a law as a lesson. Again, because the prominent spring of your Government, that is, the British Minister, is an absentee, and does not look in the face the crimes committed by his agents in the kingdom of Ireland. Residence is a kind of physical responsibility, but he has the advantage of not beholding the acts of his servants in Ireland. The perversion of your law, the late attack on one of your charters, the sale of your peerages, and the acknowledged public and professed sale of your country in 89 to buy the Irish Parliament, he sees these things with other mens eyes, and in doing these things borrows the baseness of other mens hands. The agents or instruments in Ireland by which those things are done, though they are not like him, absentees, yet they are not stationary, and they
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look not only to the protection but the opinion of another country. The seat of their action is in Ireland, but the seat of their character as well as of their punishment is in Great Britain; and Ireland is of course deprived in the present administration of her affairs of the two great sanctions held necessary to restrain the malignity of human crimes, the law of punishment and the law of reputation, and the public weal of this country is left for its preservation to the remote apprehension which her Ministers may entertain of divine vengeance, and to their ambiguous speculations on a future state of reward and punishment. Again you require this responsibility the more for the reason which an Hon. Gentleman has advanced against it, because your revenues are not appropriated, and of course are the more capable of corrupt misapplication; and because you have no Place Bill or Pension Bill in this country, and thus offer to an unappropriated revenue indefinite objects of venality and influence. But there is another reason stronger than all these, a reason founded in recent experience. It has been the custom of your Ministers to rob the country in order to buy the Gentlemen of this House; one of your Ministers confessed it in this House, and stated it to have happened in 69, and foretold that it must happen in 89, and it happened accordingly.

Gentlemen

Gentlemen have said that this bill would subvert Government. It is a great charge, they will prove it. That it would alter the practice of Irish Government. In the disbursement of public money is true; but that this alteration would be a subversion of Government, is false. Every act of Parliament affecting the Government may be said to change it, every improvement is a change. The acts of 80 and 82, which some of those gentlemen opposed—the Mutiny Bill, the modification of Poyning’s law, changed the practice of your constitution, and so far might be said and were by them represented and resisted as changing the constitution: but in these cases the force of objection don’t exist in making a change, but in making such a change as is unconstitutional; and if the practice of your government in Ireland has been, as you know it has been, loose and unprincipled, the effect of an age of domination on the one hand, and of certain mean compliances on the other; and if the bill would correct such a practice by the true and unquestionable principles of the British constitution, then the change is not what those gentlemen describe it, the subversion, but it is the direct contrary, the restoration of your government subverted by those loose practices which have become diseases so inveterate in Ireland, that the Ministers of the Crown now pronounce them to be the essence of your government. What
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are those practices which those gentlemen would defend? The disbursement of public money by the treasurers of England whom they follow, to have no legal authority, and by the lord lieutenant and his secretary, whom they allow to offer no adequate responsibility. And what is the change that these gentlemen resist? a bill whose principle they acknowledge, viz. that in the disbursement of public money the executive officer shall be forthcoming to Parliament—And what are the provisions of the bill? nothing more than the specific execution of that principle—that every warrant ordering a disbursement, or imposing charge, should be signed by some great resident, stationary, Irish officer. And what is the precedent for the bill?—the example of England. Thus the charge of those gentlemen comes out to be, that Government is subverted when a practice which they don't assert to be legal is reformed by a principle they don't deny to be constitutional—their acknowledgment of the principle and their charge against the bill that does no more than enforce it—amount to a declaration on their part, that the Government, according to the present practice in Ireland, is unconstitutional—secondly, that the Government of Ireland ought to continue unconstitutional—that the persons who sign our charges or drafts for money should be officers answerable not to Ireland but to Great Britain—that

that is, that Ireland should not have an executive power, but should be governed even in the disbursement of her own money by the executive power of Great Britain ; and that the British Minister, not the King of Ireland, should have complete and exclusive authority over the Irish treasury.

Bring this argument to the test of the fact—England has in your disbursement of money from your treasury five officers forthcoming to her jurisdiction—and Ireland has not one :—this is the fact, the argument is that those five officers are the only life and constitutional officers to dispose of the money of Ireland—and that if you add Irish officers you subvert the regal Government ; that is to say, three Lords of the English treasury, together with Lord Westmoreland and Major Hobart, ought to have the entire government of the treasury of Ireland, and if you add Sir John Parnell, you overturn the constitution.

Sir, gentlemen have gone farther, and have said the bill is framed to bring a faction into power ; but it is not for them to pronounce on the characters of men. The practices their Ministry has pursued, and the principles it has professed have deprived them of any authority when they speak either of men or measures : we might
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forget our measures and beat them down by our characters: we might forget our characters and our measures, and yet stand higher than they do. So much for their presumption. Let us examine their logic—they tell you that this bill will turn one party out of power, and introduce another—Sir, this bill does no more than make it necessary to sign certain acts, and dangerous to sign them if those acts are criminal; but this can no otherwise affect the present Ministry, except as their crimes are necessary to their existence; if indeed they are so link'd with public rapine, if the sale of peerage and the sale of the country be essential to their continuation in power, then indeed I do allow the bill would be useless if it did not affect them: but attached as I am to this bill, I cannot promise my country so happy an effect from it as that of dismissing the present Ministry in Ireland from the reins of Government; but that it will mitigate the malignity of their operations and deter the repetition of their offences, is an effect which is not presumption to auspicate from the proposition before you. They tell you that the bill will turn out one party and bring in another—Sir, the bill is no mandate to the King—he may choose any set of men he pleases—if there is any thing in this argument, it is an encomium on the Opposition and a reflection on themselves—Sir, it amounts to a declaration, that if crimes in Ministers are made
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penal, the present Ministry of Ireland must retire, and that there is no body of men capable of serving the State on such constitutional terms, except the Opposition, and therefore they promise to you to reject a good law in order to exclude a good Ministry and continue a bad one. These gentlemen proceed and tell you that this bill will extinguish the Lord Lieutenant; this they assert, but they give no reason for this; they lay it down as a notorious truth and acknowledged proposition—as acknowledged a proposition and as indisputable a truth as any one of their own offences—the sale of the peerage or the sale of the country. Let us consider the effects of this bill on the powers of his Excellency—if he wishes to disburse a sum of money he puts his own signature—his Secretary does the same, and if any of the other Commissioners refuse to sign, he dismisses him, if the successors refuse he dismisses them: but if he cannot find any one established person in Ireland who will sign the warrant, then indeed he must give up the measure. But what kind of disbursement, what meretricious grant must it be, to which no men in Ireland, if answerable, will venture to put his name? Such is the speculation which the bill would prevent, and such is the speculation which the objectors to the bill would facilitate. Sir, these gentlemen, many of them have long served the Crown—they know the sacred springs of ac-
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tion and the practices of Irish government, and it is with the experience of twenty years on their heads that these gentlemen now insinuate that such speculations are necessary for the existence of an Irish Viceroy, and that if he can't rob he can't govern.

Sir, these gentlemen have most ignorantly foretold what would be the Government under this bill.—I'll tell these gentlemen most truly what is now the Irish Government without it. What is their situation? A set of men excluded in their native land from power and control, privileged only to submit their objections without any authority to stop the crime they complain of—This exclusion from all control in the disbursement of money, makes them a cypher. That control exclusively placed in the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary, his Excellency and certain English officers, makes them your masters, and the Secretary on that bench your idol—it is no longer control, it is absolute command over your money—it is this command that makes him more forcible than Demosthenes, and more persuasive than Tully; or if the name of Solomon delight him more—Solomon in all his glory—fitting among his state concubines.—See at his feet these very gentlemen who tremble at the approach of their own power and responsibility—See at the feet of a young lad
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the tributes of a degraded court—see prostrate at his feet the wisdom of age and the flame of youth—the grey head of experience—the country gentleman's shattered mask, and the veteran crown lawyer's prostituted conscience and howling remorse—even the virtues which this man don't entirely destroy, he disgraces—he humbles the energies of your mind—and contracts the exertions of your talents, and sends you for consolation from public effort to the pleasures of the table and the comedy of private life.

He not only humbles your virtues, he degrades your vices and gives them a poorer cast ; so that you lose the high mettle which sometimes mixes with human infirmity, dignifies the nature of vice and makes ambition virtue. You do not make this man a colossus, but he makes you pigmies—and both lose your natural proportion—he, his natural inferiority ; and you, your natural superiority in your native land. Thus you stand on your own hills blasted—blasted by a shrub which scalds your growth, and diminishes and dwarfs what else might become the trees of the forest and make the realm illustrious.

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